

Monster Myths

What You Will Be Able to Do When You Finish This Center:

- Describe what a myth is.
- Recognize a myth when you read one.
- Create a monster, using Play-Doh.
- Characterize your monster.
- Use graphic organizers to brainstorm a plot for your own myth.
- Begin writing your own myth.

What is a myth?

A myth is a made-up story about something that occurs in nature.

For example, you might write a myth about where thunder comes from or why snow falls during the winter.

Often, myths include creatures such as gods and goddesses.

Your myth must include a monster.

Mother Earth's Son

A Myth by Jane Yolen

Available on Scholastic:

http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths_mymyth.htm

Long ago, when Mother Earth lived by herself, far from her sisters and brothers, the stars, she was lonely. She was so lonely, she decided to make a family for herself. So she fell asleep under a blanket of ice, and when she woke up, she was the mother of a beautiful baby boy.

Now, like all little babies, the little boy was at first easy to handle. He slept a lot and ate very little, and Mother Earth carried him about on her back in a sling woven of grass and reeds.

When the baby was tired, she sang to him. "Oh little son of mine, little baby, the stars who are your uncles and aunts look down and send sweet dreams. Dreams like sugar cane, like the bees' honey." And he would fall asleep without a bit of trouble.

But as the boy grew older and began to walk and then to run, he would sometimes get into trouble. He would fling things around and splash in puddles. He would take water into his mouth and spit it all over the place. Then he would laugh and laugh, thinking this mischief was very funny.

His mother scolded him in all the languages of the earth. She would say "Little son, kleine mann, toto, mi nino, what are you doing? Do not treat your mother this way."

Like all children, for the most part he was sorry, and tried hard to be good. But every once in a while, the mischief in his head got into his hands and feet and mouth, and then he made a mess. Everywhere.

Today we know this boy by one of his mother's pet names. Have you figured out yet what it is? Check the envelope provided for the answer.

What natural events could you write a myth about? Share two of your ideas on the index cards provided.

DIRECTIONS

- Use the materials in this center to create a monster. a picture of it for you.
- Read the myth provided in this center. Then, answer the question that follows by placing your response on one index card.
- Use the **monster inventory** provided to think and write deeply about who your monster is. Use your notebook to capture your ideas.
- Finally, use the **story map** to brainstorm each part of your myth before you begin writing your draft.

Monster Inventory

1. What is your monster's name?
2. Where does your monster live?
3. Who are your monster's relatives?
4. What does your monster like to eat or drink?
5. What does your monster wish for most?
6. What is your monster's greatest fear?
7. What natural event could your monster be responsible for?

The answer is **El Niño** (Spanish for "the child"), which is a big pool of warm water that forms in the Pacific Ocean. El Niño happens once every four to ten winters when strong winds blowing from the northeast push lots of warm Pacific Ocean water together. The water then generates warm air that is whipped into the atmosphere. When the winds stop blowing, the big pool of warm water starts to drift east. El Niño can contribute to flood conditions across North and South America.